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An ANSWER to some of the Linnen-Drapers Objections.

(1698)

First, **T**hey Object, *The Indians will not sell us their Raw Silk and Salt Petre, unless we will take their Wrought Silks, &c.*

Answer. Why did not the *Indians* deny us their Raw Silk and Salt Petre sixteen years ago? For then little or no Manufactured Goods was brought over. We will shew your Lordships an Instance of this kind: The Turkey Company brought over, Forty or Fifty years ago, great quantities of Mohairs and Grogorams; and although at this time we take not one Piece of them, yet they take our Cloths and Stuffs as freely as before; and we have in Return greater quantities of Raw Silk and Grogoram Yarn than before, which Employs our Poor, spends our Growth, and is of great Advantage to the Nation.

Secondly, They Object, *That we cannot make our Manufactured Goods so cheap as the Indians.*

Answer. Ours will be as cheap in time, (if this Restraint be not laid upon theirs) but then the Price of Land will fall accordingly: For we humbly conceive, Your Lordships will Grant, That there must be a Proportion betwixt the Price of Labour and the Value of Land; for Example, If a Man works for Two Pence a day, he must buy Beef for a Farthing per pound, and his Bread, Drink, and Cloathes proportionable, or starve; and the Farmer must have his Land accordingly, or he cannot pay his Rent; and so it is plain, the Value of Land and Workmens Labour will go together.

They would have us wear their slight Shadows and rotten Calicoes in *England*, and send our own Manufactures abroad.

This shews plainly, they design the Ruine of our Home Manufactures; for where can we find Markets that will take off such vast quantities as we spend at Home? Besides, 'tis more proper for them to carry abroad their *East India* Silks, &c. For it is the Blessing of Heaven, that we have so good Woollen Stuffs of all sorts to wear in this cold Climate: And not only so, but we are able to demonstrate it to Your Lordships, That if Encouragement be given, we can furnish all Forreign Markets: The truth of this is demonstrable by what their Council declared, That the Weavers were encreased from One to Thirty in twenty years time; now if Your Lordships be pleased to consider, that as the Weavers encrease, so do their Dependants, as Combers, Spinsters, Dyers, Callenders, &c. and Throwsters of all sorts; and as all these encrease, so much more of the Growth of the Nation is Manufactured to send abroad, which bringing Returns in unmanufactured Goods, when work'd up, will be sent out again, and this will bring the King double Custom.

Thirdly, They Object, *We want Hands, and cannot make Goods to Answer the Use of India Silks, &c.*

Answer. We have not half Work enough for the Hands we have already: But if we want Hands, we may set up Factories in a great many Cities and Populous Towns in *England*, that would be glad of Work at a much cheaper Rate than we now give, (which will remove the Linnen-Drapers groundless Assertion as to the Rise of Goods, for it will certainly make them Cheaper) and then if the Company will bring us greater quantities of Raw Bengal and Cheney Silk, and fine-spun Cotton, all which we want in vast quantities, to mix with Wooll, and for Warps for Antherines, which answers the Use, and is better and cheaper than *Persian* Silks, and is Nine parts in Ten English Wooll: But if the Company will be angry, and will bring nothing but what will ruine our Home-Manufactures, there are others that will undertake to Trade thither, and bring nothing but what is for the Good of the Nation. As for Calicoes, our Tammies and Tammarines, Says, and Stuffs of all sorts, made of Wooll, Figured or Printed, will do better, and were better approved of before Calicoes were in use: However *Scotch* and *Irish* Linnen, which we have in Return for our own Manufactures, as we can prove, will be cheaper to us than Calicoes bought with our Money.

As for Mr. *Wise* saying, That One Weaver told him, he would raise his Goods if the Bill pass'd, it is very insignificant; for what is One to Five Hundred Thousand? And it is also a thing impossible; besides, he is an *Indian-Gown-Man*, and was a great Stickler against that Bill, and set his Hand to a Petition against it, and therefore we cannot tell what he meant in appearing as a Witness for the Bill.

But we entirely trust in Your Lordships Great Wisdom and Care for us, and that you will never throw this Bill out, which is not only for the good of Landlord, but also of the Tenant, the Artificer and Labourer, even the whole Nation, except a few *East India Men* and *Linnen-Drapers*, which are all nothing in comparison of the Lands of *England*, its Noble Growth, and its Growing and Encreasing Manufacturies.